



## **NEWS RELEASE**

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### **Department of Health Encourages Women to Make Their Health a Priority during Women's Health Week**

BISMARCK, N.D. – During National Women's Health Week, May 11-17, 2014, the North Dakota Department of Health would like to remind women, who often serve as caregivers for their families and put the needs of their spouses, partners, children, and parents before their own, to make their own health a priority.

National Women's Health Week is coordinated by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and is dedicated to raising awareness of women's health issues. The week begins on Mother's Day each year. During this week, individuals, families, communities, and others work to help women learn how to achieve longer, healthier and safer lives. Women's Health Week is a celebration of women taking responsibility for their own health and improving awareness of key women's health issues.

"Women's Health Week is a great time for women of all ages to step back and think about ways they can make their lifestyle healthier," said State Health Officer Terry Dwelle, M.D. "It's important to remember that we can't take care of others if we don't take care of ourselves first. I encourage all North Dakota women to take steps for a longer, healthier and happier life."

The top health risks for women include heart disease, cancer and stroke. Although these are serious concerns, there is good news. Making healthy lifestyle choices can go a long way towards reducing these health risks. Women are encouraged to take the following steps to improve their physical and mental health and lower their risk of certain disease:

- Visit a health-care professional to receive regular checkups and preventive screenings.
- Get active.
- Eat healthy.
- Pay attention to mental health, including getting enough sleep and managing stress.
- Avoid unhealthy behaviors, such as smoking, not wearing a seat belt or bicycle helmet, and texting while driving.
- Engage in healthy relationships with friends and partners.

More information about National Women's Health Week is available by visiting [www.womenshealth.gov/nwhw](http://www.womenshealth.gov/nwhw).

For more information, contact Kristal Dockter, North Dakota Department of Health, at 701.328.2493.

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